



## MEDIA FAIRNESS INITIATIVE: A WEEKLY LOOK AT BIAS IN THE NEWS

Friday, October 12, 2007

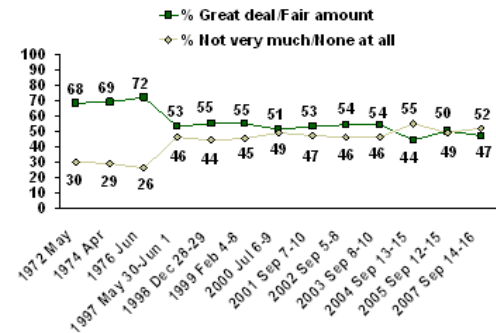


### Poll: Most Americans Do Not Trust Media

A Gallup poll released on October 8 found that **only 9 percent of Americans say they have a great deal of trust and confidence in the mass media to report the news “fully, accurately, and fairly.”** Over half of Americans (52 percent) say they have “not very much” confidence or “none at all” in the mass media.

By contrast, a Gallup survey conducted in 1976 found that trust levels were much higher than they are today. The 1976 poll found that 72 percent of Americans said they had a great deal or fair amount of trust in the news media (see graphic).

The new poll also found that more than **twice as many Americans say the news media are too liberal (45 percent) rather than too conservative (18 percent).** The tendency on the part of Americans to perceive the news media as too liberal has been a trend observed in each Gallup poll in which the question has been asked since 2001.



### Giuliani Sees Liberal Media Bias

At a town hall meeting in Estero, FL on October 6, Rudy Giuliani said he believes there is a liberal bias in the media and that he had to work around the press while he was serving as mayor of New York City.

In response to a question about remaining positive despite the media’s negative reporting, **Giuliani said he believes 8 out of 10 reporters are Democrats “and when you multiply that out across the whole country ... you do have a media bias in favor of Democratic policies and Democratic politicians,” he said.** “If I didn’t understand that, I never would have been successful as mayor of New York City.”

Giuliani went on to stress the importance of speaking directly to the people in the form of town hall meetings. “At least you would get my interpretation of what I was trying to say, rather than something prefaced by ‘the dumb mayor said’ or ‘the embattled mayor.’”

### Is the Media Burying Good News from Iraq?

On CNN’s Reliable Sources, host Howard Kurtz brought up the mainstream media’s reluctance to report on the recent decline in troop and civilian casualties in Iraq.

**“A couple of sentences on the CBS Evening and NBC Nightly News,” Kurtz said. “The New York Times ran it on page 10, The Washington Post page 14, USA Today page 16. The L.A. Times, a couple of paragraphs at the bottom of a page 4 story.** One exception was Charlie Gibson, who made it the lead story on ABC’s World News.”

Kurtz then asked for perspective from Washington Post national security reporter Robin Wright and CNN Pentagon correspondent Barbara Starr. Starr responded by questioning whether the news numbers were a trend. “This is not enduring progress,” she said. “This is a very positive step on that potential road to enduring progress.”

Kurtz followed up: “But let’s say that the figures had shown that casualties were going up for U.S. soldiers and going up for Iraqi civilians,” Kurtz said. “I think that would have made some front pages.”

**“Oh, I think inevitably it would have,” Starr responded. “I mean, that’s certainly – that, by any definition, is news.”**